

CLAIMS

1. (Withdrawn) A search supporting apparatus, comprising:

means for acquiring current position information of a search manager;

means for acquiring current position information of a person being sought; and

means for composing and displaying a relative positional relationship of the search manager and the sought person on a map based on the current position information of the search manager and the sought person.

2. (Withdrawn) The search supporting apparatus of claim 1, wherein information based on a relative positional relationship of the search manager and the sought person is search guidance information from the current position of the search manager to the current position of the sought person.

3. (Withdrawn) The search supporting apparatus of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising means for calculating a relative distance between the current position of the search manager and the current position of the sought person, and wherein the relative distance is displayed as the relative positional relationship.

4. (Withdrawn) The search supporting apparatus of any one of claim 1 to claim 3, wherein the means for displaying the map selectively displays a reduced scale map in accordance with the relative positional relationship from a plurality of maps of differing scale.

5. (Withdrawn) The search supporting apparatus of any one of claim 1 to claim 4, further comprising:

means for detecting a direction in which the apparatus is facing; and

means for displaying information regarding the direction on the map.

6. (Withdrawn) A search supporting system, comprising:

a transmission terminal, carried by a person being sought, for transmitting positional information of the sought person;

a center side device for receiving positional information of the sought person from the transmission terminal and providing the position information; and

a search terminal owned by a search manager,

the search terminal comprising:

means for making an inquiry to the center side device for positional information of the sought person;

means for receiving positional information provided in response to the inquiry;

means for acquiring information of the current position of the search terminal; and

means for displaying a relative positional relationship based on received position information of the sought person and information of the current position of the search terminal.

7. (Withdrawn) The search supporting system of claim 6, wherein the center side device or the search terminal includes means for managing a history of position information for the sought person, and the search terminal displays a movement locus of the sought person using the managed history.

8. (Withdrawn) The search supporting system of claim 6 or claim 7, wherein the means for displaying a relative position of the search terminal displays current position of the sought person as an image having an area related to information relating to errors in positional information of the transmission terminal set in advance.

9. (Withdrawn) A search supporting method, comprising the steps of:

acquiring current position of a search manager:

acquiring current position of a person being sought; and

composing and displaying arrows from the search manager to the sought person on a map based on the current positions of the search manager and the sought person.

10. (Withdrawn) An operation instructing terminal, carried by an operations manager, for receiving an operation instruction and presenting the instruction to the operations manager after a specified registration operation by the operations manager, comprising:

a storage section for storing received operation
instruction content;
a timer for clocking a time from the specified registration
operation; and
a control section for determining whether or not the time clocked by the timer has
exceeded a specified time and, if the specified time has elapsed, carrying out erasure
processing for information stored in the storage section.

11. (Withdrawn) An operation instructing system, comprising a plurality of operation
instructing terminals and a center side device for transmitting instruction content to the
operation instructing terminals,

the operation instructing terminals comprising:

a storage section for receiving and storing content of an
operation instruction from the center side device;

means for presenting content of an operation instruction stored in the storage section
to an operations manager in response to an operation from the operations manager; and

means for performing erasure processing of information stored in the storage section
if a signal instructing erasure of information stored in the storage section is received from the
center side device,

the center side device comprising:

means for managing missing flags representing loss of each
operation instructing terminal; and

signal transmission means for transmitting a signal

instructing erasure of information to an operation instructing terminal having the missing flag set.

12. (Withdrawn) The operation instructing system of claim 11, wherein:

the operation instructing terminal is provided with a timer for clocking elapsed time from a specified operation relating to the center side device, and means for carrying out erasure processing of operation instruction content stored in the storage section when the time clocked by the timer exceeds a specified time set in advance;

the center side device comprises clock means for carrying out timing management for elapsed time from the specified operation of each operation instructing terminal; and

the signal transmission means transmits a signal instructing to erase the information to the operation instructing terminal having a missing flag set when the elapsed time from the corresponding specified operation does not exceed a specified time set in advance.

13. (Withdrawn) An operation instructing system, comprising a plurality of operation instructing terminals and a center side device for transmitting instruction content to the operation instructing terminals, wherein

the operation instructing terminals comprise:

means for acquiring operation instruction content from the center side device by accessing the center side device;

a storage section for storing the acquired operation instruction content;

means for providing operation instruction content stored in the storage section to an operations manager in response to operation from the operations manager; and

means for carrying out erasure processing for information stored in the storage section if a signal instructing erasure of information stored in the storage section is received from the center side device, and

the center side device comprises:

means for managing missing flags indicating loss of each operation instructing terminal; and

signal transmission means for referring to missing flags corresponding to the operation instructing terminals that are being accessed and, when a flag is set to indicate that a terminal is missing, transmitting a signal instructing erasure of the information to that operation instructing terminal.

14. (Previously Presented) An operation instructing terminal, carried by an operations manager, the terminal comprising: means for acquiring operation instructions from an instruction center side;

a storage section for storing acquired operation instruction content;

means for presenting the acquired operation instruction content to the operations manager;

means for collecting information relating to operating conditions of a terminal; and

means for carrying out processing to make it impossible to refer to information about a sought person included in the operation instruction content stored in the storage section if the collected information related to operating conditions satisfies previously set operation stop conditions; and means for carrying out processing to make it impossible to refer to

information concerning a sought person included in the operation instruction content stored in the storage section, in accordance with an instruction acquired from the instruction center.

15. (Previously Presented) A search supporting system containing a center side device and a plurality of search supporting devices possessed by each search staff, wherein:

the center side device comprises:

means for transmitting a search instruction to a specific search supporting terminal possessed by a search manager selected from among search staff managing a search of a person being sought; and

means for providing information about the sought person relating to a received search request only in response to a request from the specific search supporting device,

wherein the search supporting devices comprise:

means for receiving a search instruction from the center side device; and

means for setting the search supporting devices to be capable of requesting the center side device for information concerning the sought person only when the search instruction is received.

16. (Previously Presented) A search supporting system, comprising a transmitter carried by a sought person, a center side device and a search supporting device possessed by every search manager, wherein:

the transmitter comprises:

means for acquiring current position information; and means for transmitting the current position information to the center side device,

the search supporting device comprises:

means for acquiring current position information and; means for transmitting the current position information and a request for sought person information to the center side device, and

the center side device comprises:

means for holding a plurality of items of information relating to a sought person and respective security levels in a correlated manner;

means for receiving current position information of a search supporting device and a request for sought person information from the search supporting device;

means for calculating information on a relative positional relationship between a transmitter carried by a sought person and a search supporting device based on current position information of the search supporting device;

means for determining a disclosable security level based on the relative positional relationship information; and

means for providing information about sought persons up to a security level set as disclosable to a requesting search supporting device based on the determination such that, as the search manager approaches closer to the sought person, sought person information having higher security levels are provided.

17. (Previously Presented) The search supporting system of claim 15, wherein each search supporting device comprises:

means for acquiring sought person information from the center side device means for storing the acquired sought person information; means for providing the acquired

sought person information to a search manger; and means for deleting the stored sought person information upon receipt of a search completion instruction input from a search manager.

18. (Previously Presented) The search supporting system of claim 15, wherein the sought person information contains image information of a portrait information of the sought person.

19. (Previously Presented) A search supporting device, possessed by a search manager, comprising:

- means for detecting its own current position;

- means for acquiring current position of a transmitter carried by a sought person;

- means for calculating a relative positional relationship of itself and the transmitter based on the detected own current position information and the current position of the transmitter;

- means for receiving and storing a plurality of items of information relating to sought persons from a center side together with respective security level attributes; and

- means for determining disclosable security levels according to the calculated relative positional relationship and providing to a search manager information, among stored information relating to sought persons, such that, as the search manager approaches closer to the sought person, those information having higher security levels are provided.

20.(Withdrawn) A search supporting device, possessed by a search manager, for acquiring and storing information relating to sought persons, and supporting a search by providing the stored information to a search manager, wherein

if a search manager inputs a search completion instruction, stored information relating to a sought person is deleted.

21. (Previously Presented) The operation instructing terminal of claim 14, further comprising:

a timer for clocking a time from a specified registration operation, the timer serving as the means for collecting information relating to operating conditions; and

a control section for determining whether or not the time clocked by the timer has exceeded a specified time and, if the specified time has elapsed, determining that the operation stop conditions are satisfied, and carrying out erasure processing for operation instruction information stored in the storage section to make it impossible to refer to the information.

22. (Previously Presented) The search supporting system of claim 15, wherein:

the center side device further comprises:

means for managing missing flags representing loss of each search supporting device;

and

signal transmission means for transmitting a signal instructing erasure of information to a search supporting device having a missing flag set to indicate that the search supporting device is missing, and

the search supporting devices further comprise:

means for storing a search instruction and sought person information received from the center side device;

means for presenting content of the stored search instruction and sought person information to the search manager; and

means for performing erasure processing of the search instruction and sought person information to make it impossible to refer to the information if a signal instructing erasure of the stored information is received from the center side device.

23. (Previously Presented) The search supporting system of claim 22, wherein, when accessed by at least one of the search supporting devices, the center side device refers to a missing flag corresponding to the accessing search supporting device and, when the flag is set to indicate that the search supporting device is missing, transmits a signal instructing erasure of the information to that search supporting device.